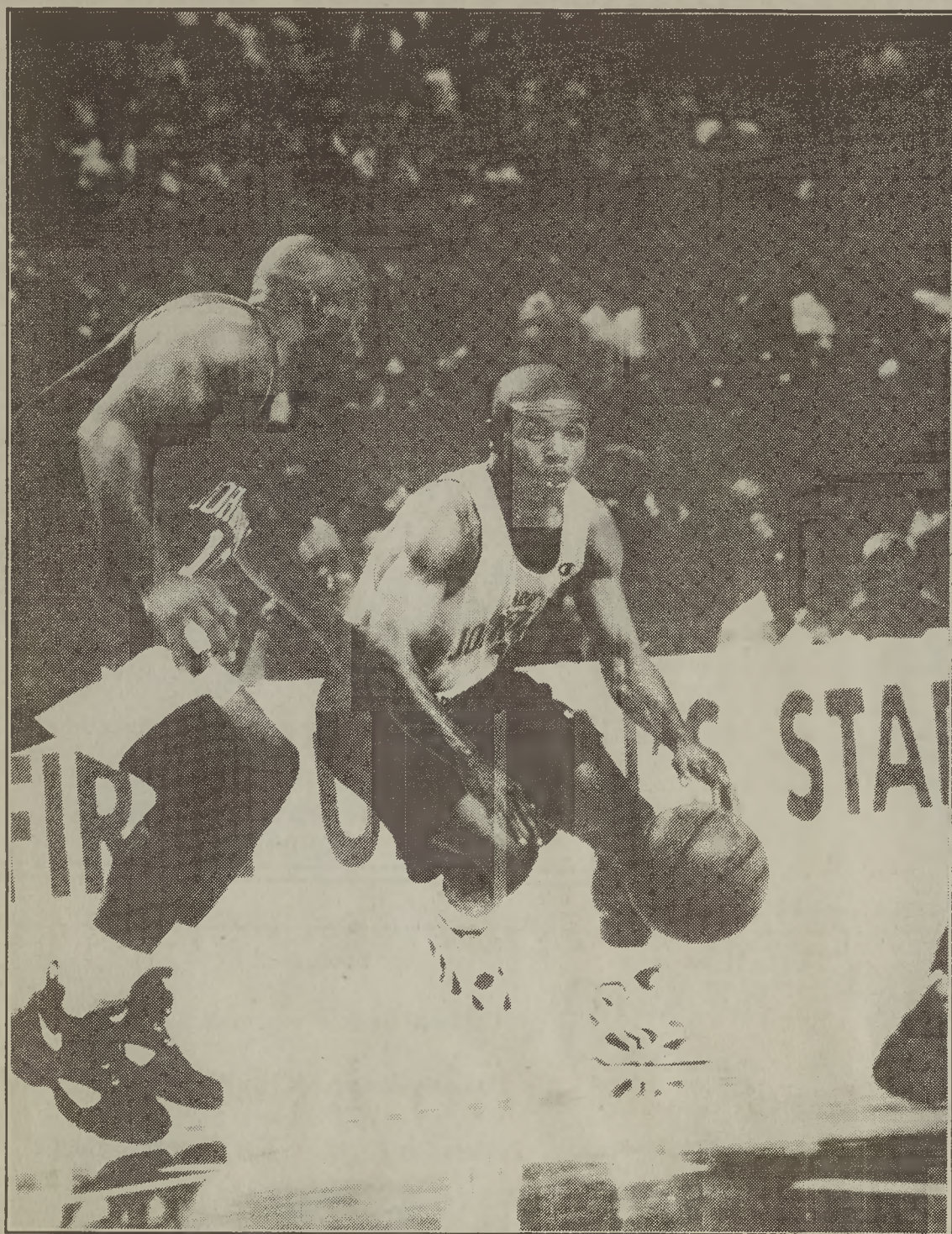


Starry, Starry Night



PHOTO/VINCENT FLETCHER

Charlotte Hornet Muggsy Bogues drives around Tim Hardaway of the Golden State Warriors Saturday during the "Starry, Starry Night" benefit basketball game at the Coliseum.

Gill's Signed, Now Will He Leave Town?

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The rumored trade of guard Kendall Gill from Charlotte to Seattle took another step Saturday when Charlotte Hornets officials announced the signing of Gill to a long-term contract.

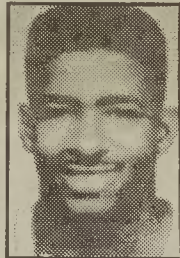
With Gill signed, and no longer a free agent, his chances of finding an NBA team interested in trading for him are greater.

Gill's signing was announced at a news conference at the Charlotte Coliseum, two hours before a benefit all-star game hosted by Hornets star Larry Johnson.

It is Hornet policy not to reveal the terms of any contracts.

"By having Kendall signed, we are now able to look into some possible scenarios with other clubs, while still holding the option of keeping the current team intact," Hornets President Spencer Stolpen said. "Our man-

agement team will get together and collectively decide what is best for the organization."



Gill

pressed interest privately in being traded by Charlotte, was not at the news conference. He has maintained publicly that he wants to remain a Hornet.

Gill, 25, was selected by the Hornets with the fifth overall pick in the 1991 draft. He is third on the franchise's all-time scoring list with 3,695 points.

The Gill trade rumor, which has been circulating in Charlotte and throughout the NBA all summer, naturally will get even hotter now, Stolpen said.

"Free agency always causes a lot of interest," he said. "We always look to do what will better our franchise."

Gill, who reportedly has expressed interest privately in being traded by Charlotte, was not at the news conference. He has maintained publicly that he wants to remain a Hornet.

Gill, 25, was selected by the Hornets with the fifth overall pick in the 1991 draft. He is third on the franchise's all-time scoring list with 3,695 points.

Hearst Ready To Run For Cardinals

By Mel Reisner
ASSOCIATED PRESS

TEMPE, Ariz. - Garrison Hearst hit the ground running in an attempt to make up time lost during his 36-day holdout.

Hearst, the third player and first running back drafted this year, signed a three-year, \$7.5 million contract with the Phoenix Cardinals on Saturday. Then he started a conditioning program to get his body in shape for the pounding NFL defenders will give him.

Hearst won't be tackled by his teammates this week while the Cardinals prepare for Sunday's opener in Philadelphia, but he is going through a 16-armed device known as "the blaster" and being asked to hit blocking sleds.

"We certainly won't take any foolish chances," said Bobby Jackson, who coaches the running backs. "But I don't think we're going to treat him with kid gloves, either, because the Eagles are going to try to put everything on him they can."

Coach Joe Bugel said how much the 5-foot-11, 195-pound running back plays depends on Hearst adding to knowledge gleaned from the playbook and videotape of a minicamp he attended.

"I hope I can get out and learn the offense as quick as possible," Hearst said when

he arrived.

Hearst gained 3,232 yards rushing in three seasons at Georgia, 1,547 last year when he finished third in Heisman Trophy balloting and set Southeastern Conference records for points (126), touchdowns (21), rushing touchdowns (19) and yards per carry (6.8).

He stayed in shape by lifting weights and running and studied materials provided by the Cardinals.

The staff will "narrow down a small package" of plays for Hearst, but facets of the job such as pass protection are more complex and take more time, Jackson said.

Even the ballcarrying may not be that simple.

Jackson said this season is the third straight in which his team's feature back has reported late. Two years ago, it was San Diego's Marion Butts and last year Johnny Johnson, whom the Cardinals used as trade bait to move ahead of the New York Jets and draft Hearst third overall.

"He (Butts) comes in and carries the ball five times and gains four yards and goes the wrong direction twice. That's a two-year veteran. Last year, Johnny Johnson comes in the week of the first game and doesn't even dress," Jackson said.

Bugel said Hearst was not a delicate player.

"You can tell by his body

structure he's a powerful kid. Don't hit him on the back - you may break your hand," Bugel said.

The Cardinals are counting on Hearst to duplicate Emmitt Smith's feat in 1990. That year, the Dallas rookie missed the preseason but still managed to rush for 937 yards, catch 24 passes and spark the Cowboys' resurgence.

Phoenix was 4-12 last season, and Bugel faces a win-or-else mandate. Hearst's success will help determine whether Bugel keeps his job, but Hearst said he wasn't thinking about background issues.

"I really don't go into a season looking to save people's job; I go into a season looking to win, looking to be better than last year," he said.

At 22, Hearst is in the salary range of quarterback Steve Beuerlein, a sixth-year player who became the highest-paid player in franchise history when he signed a \$7.5 million, three-year deal a few days before the draft.

Agent Richard Howell predicted the Hearst contract would stand up to the scrutiny of the NFL, which voided the first package the Seattle Seahawks offered No. 2 pick Rick Mirer.

Howell declined to discuss details of the contract talks but said they dragged on partly because of unfamiliarity on both sides with the rookie salary cap.

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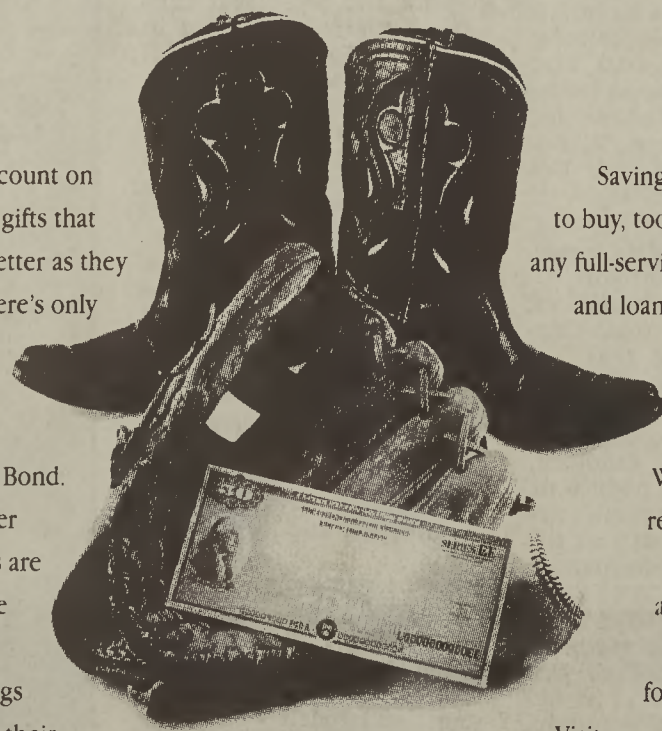
The Charlotte Post

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